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**Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development**

## Letter dated 3 September 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the welcome message from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Mr. Igor S. Ivanov, to the participants of Dushanbe International Fresh Water Forum, held from 29 August to 1 September 2003 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 97 of the preliminary list of items to be included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-eighth regular session of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Sergey **Lavrov**

* A/58/150.

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## Annex to the letter dated 3 September 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

## Welcome message from Mr. Igor Ivanov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, to participants and guests at the International Fresh Water Forum in Dushanbe

I wish to welcome most sincerely the participants in the Dushanbe International Fresh Water Forum.

Supplying the world's population with freshwater is today quite clearly an issue which is coming to the fore among a number of global priorities for international cooperation. The Millennium Assembly and the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg set the goal of halving the number of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015. If that goal is to be reached, all countries will have to take effective and concerted measures in this area.

The Russian Federation highly appreciates Tajikistan's initiative, supported by the fifty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly, to declare 2003 the International Year of Freshwater. An event of that scale is, in our view, a valuable way of mobilizing the political will of countries and increasing public awareness of the need to solve vital water problems.

I should also like to thank Tajikistan for organizing and holding this Forum, one of the main events of the International Year of Freshwater.

We believe that the Dushanbe Forum will contribute substantially to developing international cooperation regarding freshwater, and to efforts to tackle this vital global problem.